



The history of Israel, viewed as the Theocracy, or Kingdom of God, consists of three periods : First, that under the guidance of Prophets (from Moses to Samuel); secondly, that under the rule of Kings (from Saul to the Babylonish Captivity); and, thirdly, that under the reign of High-priests (from Ezra to the birth of Jesus Christ). Thus the Theocracy had passed through its full typical development in all its stages, when He came, to Whom they all pointed : Jesus Christ, the Prophet, King, and High-priest of the Kingdom of God. The period described in the present volume closes one of these stages, and commences another. The connecting link between them was Samuel — who alone fully realised the mission of the Judges, and who was also Divinely appointed to inaugurate the new institution of royalty in Israel. That royalty next appeared in its twofold possibility — or, as we might express it, in its negative and positive aspects. Saul embodied the royal ideal of the people, while David represented the Scriptural ideal of royalty in its conscious subjection to the will of the Heavenly King. Saul was, so to speak, the king after Israel's, David after God's own heart. But with the actual introduction of monarchy the first period had come to an end, and a new era begun, which was intended to continue till the third and last preliminary stage was reached, which prepared the way for the Advent of Him, Who was the fulfilment of the typical meaning of all. - Summary by Preface

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